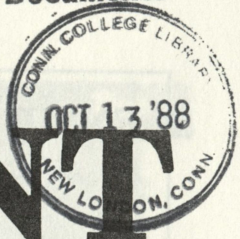
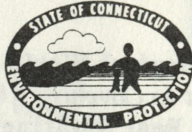


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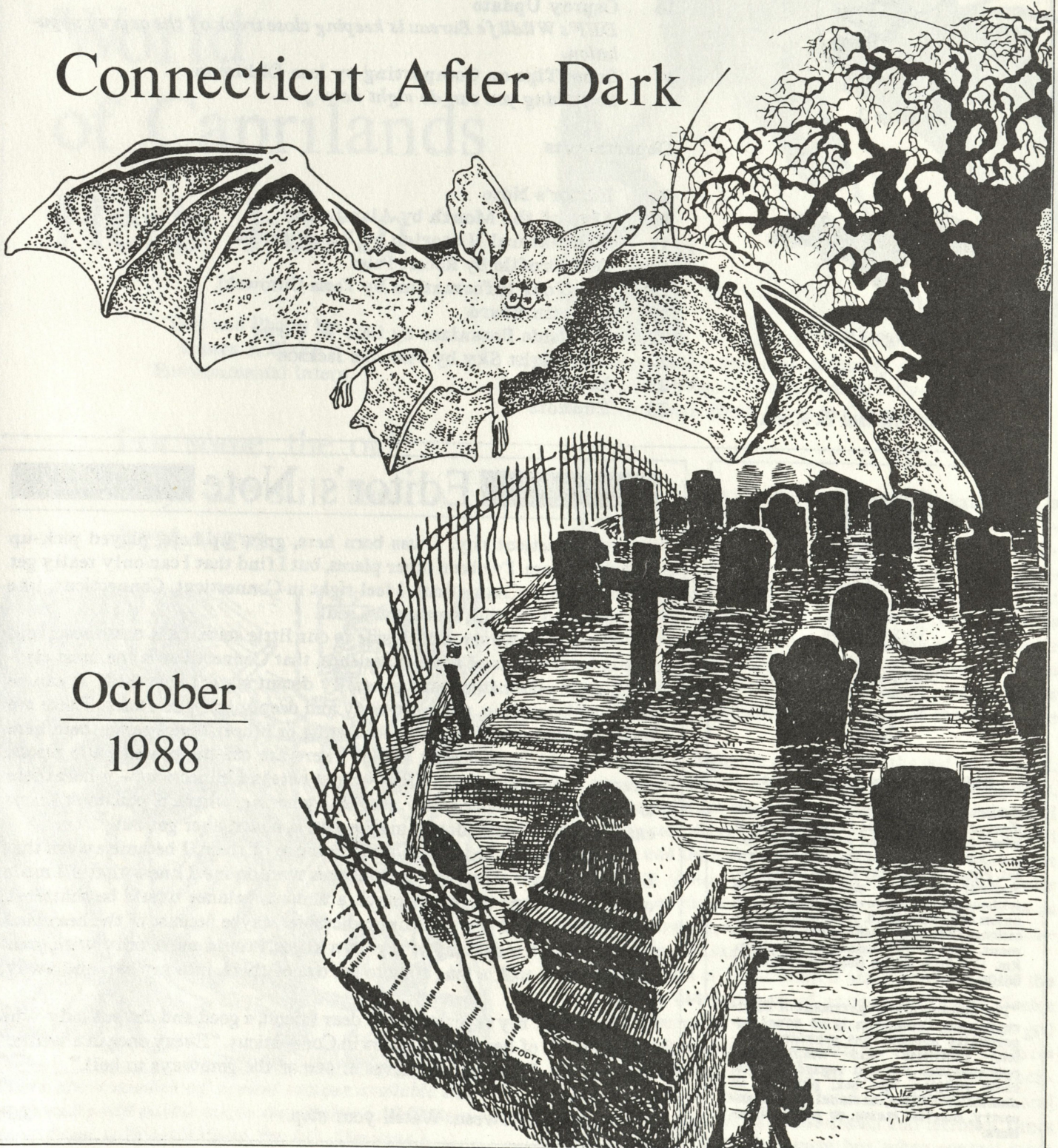
CONNECTICUT

ENVIRONMENT



The Citizens' Bulletin of the Connecticut Department of Environmental Protection

Connecticut After Dark



October
1988

CONNECTICUT
ENVIRONMENT

October 1988
Volume 16 Number 2
\$6/year



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Cover by Michael D. Klein

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DEP Connecticut Environment

Published 11 times a year by the Department of Environmental Protection. Yearly subscription, \$6.00; two years, \$11.00. Second class postage paid at Hartford, Connecticut. Please forward any address change immediately. Material may be reprinted without permission provided credit is given, unless otherwise noted. Address communications to Ed., DEP Connecticut Environment, Dept. of Environmental Protection, Rm. 112, State Office Bldg., Hartford, CT 06106.

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Editor's Note

I'm a Connecticut boy. I was born here, grew up here, played pick-up basketball here. I've been other places, but I find that I can only really get comfortable in Connecticut. I feel right in Connecticut. Connecticut, like old time rock 'n' roll, soothes my soul.

There is, however, a dark side to our little state. I am convinced, and this is on the basis of some experience, that Connecticut is the most civilized, most reasonable, most generally decent state; I also think it can be the most terrifying, the most truly and deeply scary of states. There are places in our state -- and it is not fitting or proper that I name them here -- where old logic doesn't apply. There are off-the-beaten-path places, strange, even malevolent places -- right here in Connecticut -- where there is something fundamentally, cosmically *wrong*, where, if you don't know exactly what you're doing, maybe you'll never, ever get out.

Some months ago, I blundered into one of them. I became aware that I was a stranger there, that hostile eyes were on me. I knew that if I made one single wrong or abrupt move, a tenuous balance would be shattered, and things would get, well, unpredictable. Maybe because of the heaviness of the air, or the shaking of my own knees, I could move only with great difficulty. It took a long time to get out of there, into my car, and away, away.

I spoke of my experience to a dear friend, a good and devout lady who had lived all of her 80-plus years in Connecticut. "Every once in a while," she told me, "we find ourselves at one of the gateways to hell."

Ohhh.

Happy Halloween. Watch your step.

R.P.

Stepping into the Magical World of Caprilands Herb Farm

Text and Photos by
Laura J. Blake
Environmental Intern

For some, the old
ways are still the
best ways.



There are a number of special recipes available that supposedly will enable you to see witches. (All illustrations from A Witch's Brew, by A.G. Simmons.)



Adelma Grenier Simmons, author of some 35 books on herb gardening, is the internationally-known owner of Caprilands Herb Farm in Coventry.

THERE ARE THOSE WHO FEEL that halloween is really the quintessential New England holiday — pumpkins, witches and goblins, leaves crinkling underfoot, the snap in the autumn air. Somehow, it is at Halloween that the deepest truth of the New England spirit — whatever that truth may be — reveals itself. There is something about Halloween that makes us nod, smile knowingly, and remember old, vague, distant and yet also very close things. At Halloween, we remember things about ourselves that other times — most of the time — we tend to forget.

Halloween began as a festival for the god of the dead, a night when all the wicked souls were called together. The old legends are of great processions of the living and the resurrected dead. The sacrificial victims, accompanied by priests and the spirits of the dead, were led to the great pyre which would soon blaze up to the heavens. Paler reflections of those old rites have come down to us as today's Halloween, with scarecrows, corn dollies, and imitation skulls and skeletons.

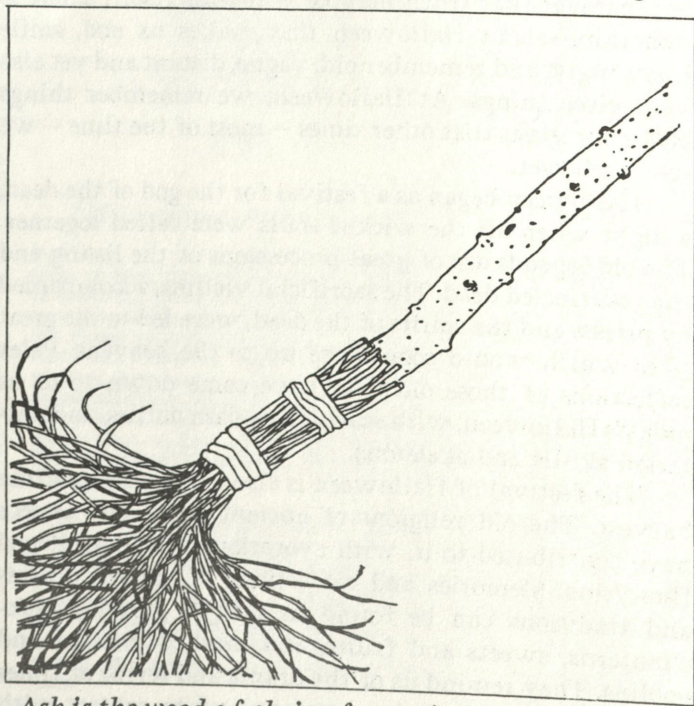
The festival of Halloween is also a celebration of the harvest. The old religions of ancient Rome and Greece have contributed to it, with evocations of the great god Dionysius. Memories and reflections of many cultures and traditions can be found in today's glowing jack-o'-lanterns, sweets and fruits, and masked witches and goblins. They remind us of the drama and terror of times perhaps less civilized than ours, but when contact with

raw, primal energy was very much a part of everyday reality.

ERIE WINDS FROM PAST CENTURIES can almost be felt whispering through the trees of Caprilands Herb Farm. Caprilands, located in Coventry, is many things: It is 50 acres of meticulously planned herbal gardens; it is a group of magical buildings that are almost 200 years old; and, most of all, it is the person of Adelma Grenier Simmons, who is a fountain of herbal lore and who delights in sharing her vast knowledge with visitors. At Caprilands, the celebrations, traditions, and festivals of the past are brought to life.

At springtime, there is the Maypole in the garden; in fall and winter, harvest celebrations are held almost every week. You will find that anyone who has visited Caprilands Herb Farm speaks of it with delight and enthusiasm. But, what you should do is visit it yourself. You will get first-hand information, maybe even more than you bargained for, from Mrs. Simmons, who has lived, worked, and planned for Caprilands since 1929. Herb gardening has brought her international fame as an author, lecturer, and television personality.

AT CAPRILANDS, MRS. SIMMONS has created a farm that is successful economically, yet which still remains shrouded in the mystery and legends of past cultures. Herbs that were once used in magical ritual now hang drying in the barn. Precise instructions of their use can be provided by Mrs. Simmons, who can be found strolling among her gardens almost every morning. She will also tell you stories relating to the plant you are using and tips on self-protection, as would be absolutely necessary if your adversary happened to be an evil spirit.



Ash is the wood of choice for a witch's broom handle.



Each of the meticulously cared-for gardens at Caprilands is a little world unto itself.

The celebration of Halloween is a major three-day event at the farm, with decorations and discussions of the myths and traditions. In autumn, the farm is a delight for the senses, with the unique designs and scents of each particular garden. The buildings on the farm include a barn, usually filled at the afternoon lecture, and a gift shop containing products made at Caprilands and one of the most complete collections of books on herbal gardening and lore anywhere. One of the reasons it is complete is that Mrs. Simmons has written a staggering number of the books herself, some of which are beautifully illustrated by her granddaughter, Joan Simmons.

The 18th century home where Simmons still lives holds three — count 'em, three — dining rooms, all of which are used on a regular basis. Lectures take place every afternoon, given either by Simmons or an assistant, and are immediately followed by the luncheon. Weekday lunches and high tea on Sunday afternoon offer time for visitors to ask questions and get an introductory taste of some of the herbs in the gardens.

BEFORE LUNCH, THE VISITOR may have tea in the greenhouse and view the various plants and gardening materials that are on sale. The old dairy house is now a bookstore, containing the 35 books Simmons has authored.

On the shelves are books which contain histories and legends of herbs and their uses. Simmons' approach to writing on herbs is to focus on the history of the plant, as well as its practical use. In the autumn season of spirits

and witches, one will find instructions to keep good luck within the house. Magical wreaths might be helpful, or perhaps a more effective solution would be to use the directions given in one of Simmon's books for making the witch's broom. (Make sure the handle is of ash; this allows the witch her power of flight and will also help to ward off the evil spirits.)

And, in case you didn't know, there are good witches and there are bad witches. Some witches are looking out for your best interests and some aren't. Not only that, but the uninitiated may not be able to tell them apart. Each uses a different set of plants in spells and remedies. Many of these magical properties can be found in any ordinary herbal garden. For centuries, herbal remedies have been widely used, although many practitioners have had difficulty with contemporary local authority.

FOLKLORE IS AS MUCH A PART of Caprilands Herb Farm as are the plants in the 32 gardens. Simmons finds that the legends and stories behind herbs and their occult link provide much of the color in her lectures. In building up each garden, she always kept in mind the history of plants and how they would interact.

The herb gardens that are now the highlight of Caprilands were not part of the first plan for the farm. It was to serve as a home for Simmons and her parents. Their wish was to restore the property to a working condition. This was not easy, as the house had formerly been used as a chicken coop. After the removal of wire and mess, the



It was believed that the mandrake root only grew under a gallows.

building was eventually returned to its original condition.

The place was intended to be a dairy farm, with cattle, pigs, and chickens, much like the farms the family had left back home in Vermont. This type of farm would require a full-time proprietor, but none of the family was willing to give up a good job during the national depression of 1929. The dairy farm idea was given up, and instead the family began to plant smaller gardens. At one time, Simmons even tried her hand at goat farming, and at one point had a herd of 50 purebreds. In fact, the name Caprilands comes from *capra*, the goat, as in Capricorn.

MRS. SIMMONS' POSITION as a department store buyer left her little time to give to her first love, gardening. She did plant, however, one small garden on a hill behind the house. As she worked, the idea for more gardens of this sort occurred to her. "Each would be a complete garden in its own confines," says Mrs. Simmons. "It would also be a teaching medium. The individualized gardens would dramatize some place in herbal garden history and be a living demonstration of planting, simple design and appropriate accessories. It would be a living natural workshop." In *The Garden Walk*, a book Simmons wrote to answer the questions she was often asked about Caprilands, she says, "I feel that the books teach and give the people who visit us here something permanent to take away with them. Plants will die, but a book is something they can hold on to."



One of the quaint and lovely buildings at Caprilands, some of which date back 200 years.



Visitors come to Caprilands from all over the world, as well as from right next door.

The books have extended Simmons' reputation. She has become a much sought-after lecturer, both for her knowledge and her personality; she entertains as she informs. On a recent television show, she brought David Letterman a huge salad of herbs and flowers as a gift.

RECIPES FOR A SALAD SUCH AS THIS can be found in a cookbook by Simmons. Even her gardening books will usually contain one or two recipes along with the planting directions. A favorite is *Herb Growing in Five Seasons*, which gives plans and details on growing herbs in all seasons, indoors and out. Written 25 years ago, it is still one of the best authorities on herb gardening.

In all of Simmons' books, there is a charming mixture of fact and fantasy. The most recent book is *The Wreath Book*, and is a special celebration of the 50th anniversary of Caprilands. The first commercial product of the farm was the dried wreath. At first looked on as oddities by the neighbors at craft fairs, the wreaths soon caught on and the farm's reputation started to grow. The wreaths are still made by two full-time employees and either shipped to customers through mail-order or bought in the gift shop. Wreaths consist of all kinds of herbs and flowers, depending upon whether the wreath was for decorative, fragrant, or magical purposes and can be ordered for any specific need.

ANYONE WHO VISITS THE GARDENS at Caprilands can learn from the experience. People are in fact encouraged to copy, with booklets and charts giving tips and guidelines on how to begin and continue herb gardens of any variety. The gardens are separated according to themes. There is Saints' Garden, which consists of plants like Angelica, Madonna's lilies, and Rosemary. The Butterfly Garden was the first of the planned and patterned gardens. It was designed by Simmons to be an all-inclusive herb garden that could be maintained by one person. In addition to being exhibited at a Connecticut

Herb Society show, it was also featured in the *National Gardener*.

Simmons bases many of her strategies and plans on the old herb gardens of England. She plants the older varieties; newer varieties are not as good and do not hold up as well over time, Simmons feels. Differences in the looks of plants occur due to the differences in climate, but Simmons tells of a compliment she received recently: A man who had spent much of his life in England remarked to her that in all his years of living in the U.S., this was the first time he had become homesick for England.

In recent years, the number of Americans planting recreational gardens has increased. "America is becoming a nation of gardeners. People are aware of the environment even if it is just the tree planted in their back yard. When the things that surround them begin to be torn up, people see how important keeping them alive is. Those are the people who come here."

AND, REST ASSURED, PEOPLE DO COME to Caprilands. They may drop in from next door, or come from a continent away. The farm has a world-wide reputation that grows with each lecture tour Simmons makes. English and Australian tourists will often make a special stop to view the gardens.

For visitors to Caprilands, there will always remain a hint of the past that can be smelled whenever the wind blows through the thyme and the applemint. And there are plans for the future. Simmons would like to see more of the land put to use.

"Autumn is a great time to come out here. All our work is on display in fiery color," says Simmons. Don't be afraid of the spirits, though. Those oranges and reds are the very colors that frighten the witches. They remind them of the fires, which they fear. Then again, it might help to make a witch's broom anyway, just in case. ■

For further information, please write Caprilands Herb Farm, 534 Silver Street, Coventry, CT 06238, or phone: (203) 742-7244.





A huge black bear. Bear sightings are on the increase in Connecticut. (Photo: L.L. Rue III.)

Now, here's what you should do.

THE DEP'S WILDLIFE BUREAU has received an increased number of reports of black bear sightings in recent years, indicating that bears are at least temporary residents of some Connecticut towns and will almost certainly extend their range within the state. There is evidence that some bears spend the winter here; for instance, bears have been sighted in the fall, and again in the spring, in the same localities.

What should you do if you encounter a bear? If the bear has heard, smelled, or seen you, chances are it will make a hasty retreat. If the bear

is unaware of your presence, alert it by making noise and it will probably run away. In all cases, you should not approach a bear, especially younger bears which may be accompanied by an adult.

Black bears (*Ursus americanus*), the only bears native to New England, are attracted to bee hives, garbage, and some agricultural crops. Some simple control measures will help keep these marauders at bay. Electric fencing may be used to prevent damage to bee hives, and adding ammonia to garbage will discourage bears (and raccoons) from raiding it. Anything that might

smell like a free meal, such as pet food, should not be left outside, especially at night, since bears are nocturnal.

The Wildlife Bureau is continuing to monitor the status of black bears as well as bobcats and fishers. Please report your sightings of any of these species to the Bureau's Furbearer Program at Sessions Woods Wildlife Management Area, P.O. Box 1238, Burlington, CT 06013; Phone: (203) 584-9830.

(This article was reprinted from SCOPE, a publication of DEP's Wildlife Bureau.)

Walking the Canal

by

Alan Levere

Senior Environmental Analyst

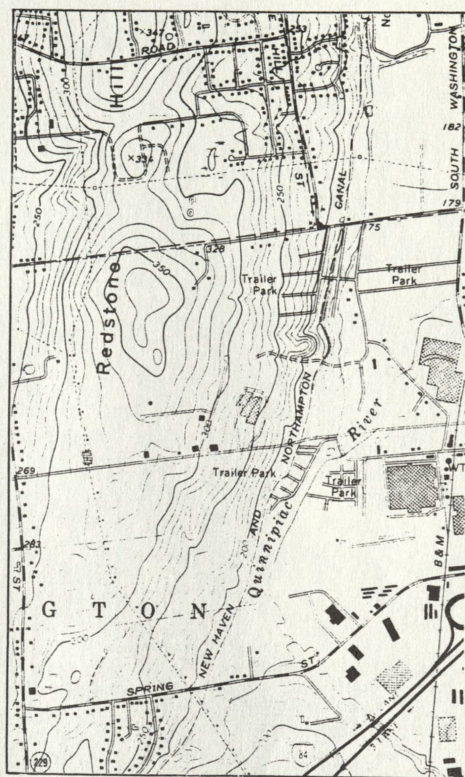
OVER THE YEARS, I have walked a good deal of the length of Connecticut's Farmington Canal. And when I'm out there, sometimes it seems like I'm going back in time, to those days 150 years ago; I can see the young boys leading the mules down the tow path and see some of the passengers on the deck of the canal boats, lazing in the sun. The era of the Farmington Canal must have been a wonderful time.

When I first heard of the canal, I was surprised that Connecticut was bisected north-south by this waterway that had been hand-dug and commercially functional 150 years ago.

Its northern reach was Northampton, Massachusetts, and its southern terminus was New Haven. Here in Connecticut, the canal passed through the communities of Granby, Simsbury, Avon, Farmington, Plainville, Southington, Cheshire, Hamden, and New Haven. It was an avenue of transit for farm goods from the upper Connecticut River valley to Long Island Sound and markets in New York. Many remnants of that engineering feat remain on our landscape today. Some stretches are preserved in town parks.

As you might guess, one of the best ways to explore those remnants of the canal is to refer to the U.S.G.S. topographic maps. Many of the maps that encompass canal towns actually have dashed lines — labelled 'abandoned canal,' or 'New Haven and Northampton Canal' (as it was also known) that indicate the path of the old waterway. Two topo maps this month will help you locate it in the field.

The Bristol topo sheet is first. A three-mile section of the canal bed stretches across the southeast corner of



this map. As it winds north, it's easy to find the dashed line between the 180- and the 190-foot topographic lines. Before it bends east to leave this sheet, the canal passes through Norton Park in the town of Plainville. Here you can follow it for several hundred feet, and a monument reveals some of the canal's local history.

IN CONNECTICUT, the Farmington Canal descended from an elevation of 225 feet in Granby to sea level in New Haven. The descent was possible through the use of a series of 28 'locks.' Each lock lowered the canal boats an average of eight feet.

Canal locks (or chambers) were about the length of a canal boat, with wooden doors at either end. If you were heading south, the northern doors of the lock were opened, allowing the water in the lock to rise to the upstream elevation. When the boat moved inside the lock, the upstream doors were closed and water was allowed to run out of the lock, lowering the water level to meet the downstream elevation. When the procedure was completed, the southern doors

were opened and on you went.

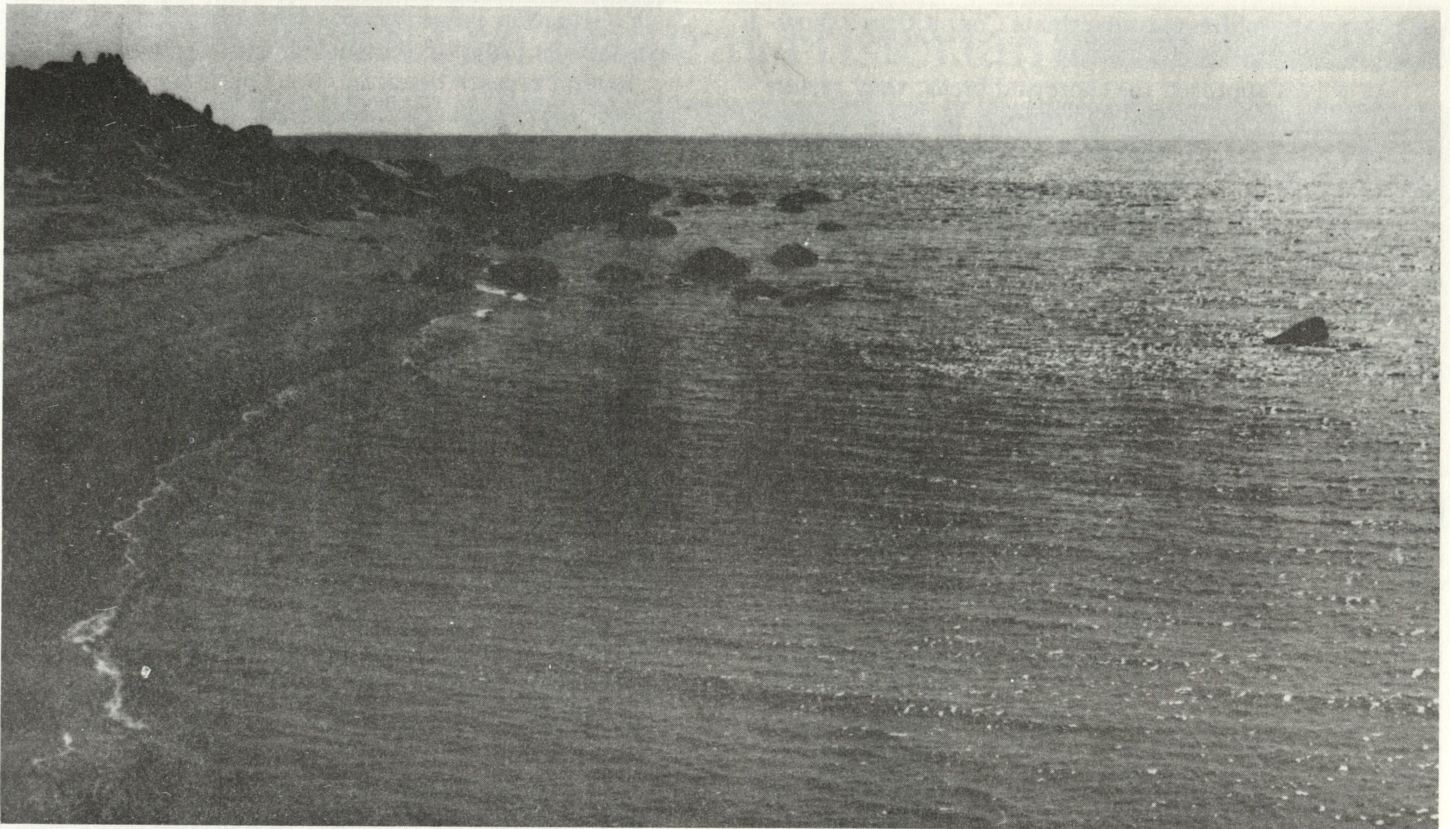
THE RAILROAD brought an end to the canal era. Ultimately, rail lines used the canal bottom or the raised towpath for rail beds. A look at the topos today shows the canal runs out in many places but its path is continued by railroad tracks.

On the Mount Carmel topo sheet, the canal gets a little more tricky to follow, but no less rewarding when you do. Here it closely parallels or is, at least in part, what is labelled the 'Boston and Maine' railroad. The town of Cheshire has rebuilt Lock Number 12 along with the lock keeper's house and 1,000 feet of canal bed. This park is a definite 'must' to visit. Lock 12 park can be found between the railroad and Willow Brook crossing of North Brooksville Road in Cheshire. The Mount Carmel topo is also of interest, as Sleeping Giant State Park, with its lookout tower, quarry, and trails, as described in the book *Born Among the Hills*, is located here.

When the path of the canal becomes obliterated by today's development, you can follow its elevation along the topo lines until it leaves the urban area. Knowing that it had to stay level helps to estimate the location. Close inspection of the topo lines reveal man-made alterations in the topography and soon the path of the old canal will be no mystery.

EXPLORING the canal path is a good excuse to be out this month. With the topo maps you'll see how and why the waterway wound to avoid the local relief, and with a little imagination, in the quiet of the woods, you might just catch a vision of those bygone days.

The Bristol and the Mount Carmel topographic maps are available for \$2.50 each. Seven and a half percent of Connecticut sales tax and \$2.00 to cover handling must be included. Please send to: DEP-NRC, Map Sales, Room 555, 165 Capitol Avenue, Hartford, CT 06106.



The shoreline is the result of many dynamic processes which, when everything is going right, operate in equilibrium. Shown here, the beach at Harkness Memorial State Park in Waterford. (DEP file photo.)

The Changing Shoreline

The systems which influence the shoreline are in a dynamic, delicate balance.

CONNECTICUT'S SHORELINE has a number of distinct land features such as tidal marshes, intertidal flats, bays, islands, headlands and bluffs, and beaches. These features are a direct result of a number of physical and geologic factors, including glaciation, changing sea level, waves, tidal currents, and wind. Through the processes of erosion, transportation, and deposition, these factors created and continue to modify existing landforms.

It is important to bear in mind that any feature under the influence of a number of separate but interrelated factors is dynamic. Because of this, no shoreline or shore feature should be considered as strictly erosional, depositional, or stable, but rather, each should be viewed as continuously changing.

APPROXIMATELY 8,000 YEARS AGO, rising sea level first began to influence Long Island Sound, which was previously a freshwater lake. Since that time,

sea level has continued to rise and has "drowned" features which were previously upland, such as river valleys and glacial moraines. Such land forms as small embayments (New Haven Harbor) and some offshore islands (Norwalk Islands) subsequently appeared. In addition, tides and related currents began to affect the Sound.

Surface waves are produced by wind blowing over open water. Generally speaking, wave conditions are governed by three factors: *fetch*, or the length of unobstructed water over which the wind blows; duration, or the length of time the wind blows at a given speed from a given direction; and the velocity of the wind. As each of these factors is increased, larger waves can be generated. In the Long Island Sound area, wind direction varies on a seasonal basis, with winds blowing generally from the south and southwest during spring and summer months, and from the north and northwest during the fall and winter. Winds blowing from southerly directions gener-

ate the waves which most dominate Connecticut's shoreline.

As waves approach the shore and break, they release energy. This energy erodes and transports shoreline sediments in three ways. *Longshore currents*, which are created when waves break at an angle to the shore, carry sediments along (parallel to) the shore. Also, waves may transport sediments either on- or off-shore, depending upon the nature of the actual "breaker." The steeper "plunging" breakers tend to move material off-shore, while the less steep "spilling" breakers tend to move material on-shore.

CURRENTS CREATED BY THE ACTION of the tides are also important in the erosion, transportation, and deposition of sediments along our shores, particularly at inlets, bays, and river mouths. When tides enter small coves, harbors, and other embayments with inlets (constricted openings), the velocity of the current is significantly higher. The narrower the inlet, the higher the current velocity. At inlets, an equilibrium situation normally exists; that is, there is a balance between the size of the inlet and the volume of the tidal exchange. If an inlet is below a certain equilibrium size (due to the deposition of sediment from storms, etc.), stronger currents will erode the material from the inlet, eventually returning it to equilibrium. If, on the other hand, the size of the inlet is above the equilibrium, currents are slower and may deposit material at the inlet.

Winds, in addition to generating waves, are also capable of moving sediments along the shore above water level. Their influence is most apparent in the formation of sand dunes. As mentioned previously, normal wind direction varies seasonally. Hurricane-force winds are most likely to occur during the late summer and fall. Waves generated by hurricane winds cause significant and sudden changes to our shores, such as breaching barrier beaches or filling inlets.

BEACHES are generally considered to be erosion-prone; however, their initial development is a result of the depositional process. The character of the beach is regulated by the balance between erosional and depositional forces. When these forces are in dynamic equilibrium, beach form remains constant. When the equilibrium is altered, the beach may either grow or diminish in size. For example, if the sediment source of the beach is depleted, either as a result of a natural process or through the construction of a man-made feature such as a sea wall, the beach will recede. If, however, additional sediment becomes available and is transported to the beach, it may increase in size.

Another factor affecting beaches is rising sea level. As sea level rises, the beach as a system may retreat in response to changing balances between erosion and deposition. Thus, it may eventually over-ride the land behind it.

Such a situation exists at Cedar Island, in Clinton, where peat deposits project from the beach face.

Several types of beach are found on the shores of Long Island Sound. Included are: *spits*, or projections of sand attached at one end to an island or the mainland; *tombolos*, or stretches of sand connecting an island and the mainland or two islands; and *pocket beaches*, which occur in small crescent-shaped coves and directly front uplands. Spits and tombolos may be referred to as *barrier beaches* in instances where they extend parallel to the mainland, but are separated from it by a body of water or marsh. Examples of these types of beaches may be seen at Griswold Point in Old Lyme (spit), and on the Norwalk Islands (tombolo).

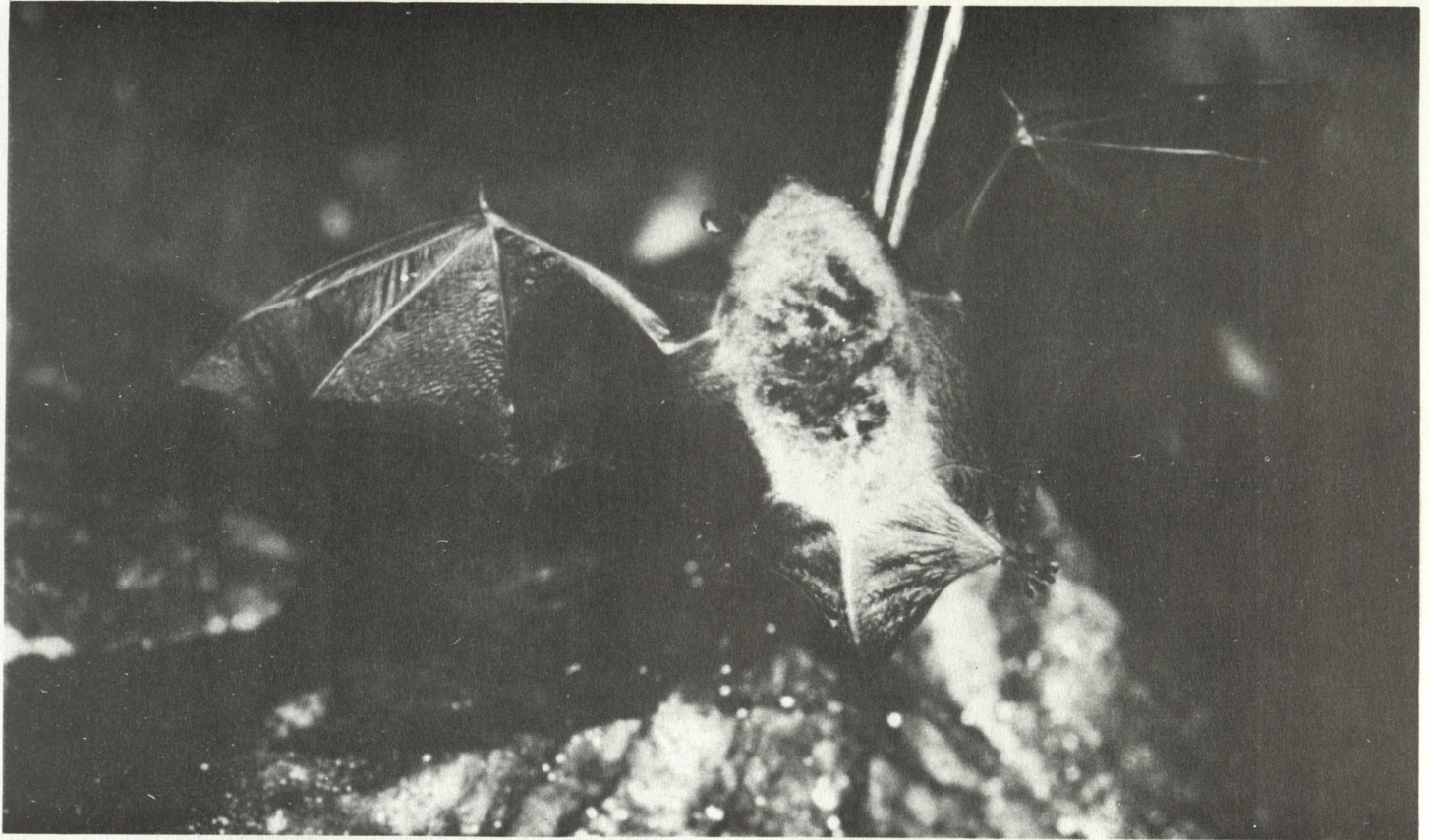
TIDAL MARSHES DEVELOP where finer sediments accumulate. When these sediments build to at least the mid-tide level (the water level intermediate between high and low tides), plants may begin to colonize them and to create marsh systems. Plant roots stabilize the sediment and their stems trap additional sediments. Once plants have colonized the sediment, decaying vegetation accumulates, eventually forming peat.

Tidal marshes began forming on the coast several thousand years ago, when sea level was much lower than it is today. As sea level rose, many marshes that had formed in shallow coastal waters were able to accumulate peat and sediment rapidly enough to keep pace with the rise, and therefore are in existence today. Like beaches, marshes have also migrated landward as sea level was rising, over-riding the uplands on their landward edge while being eroded and/or overtopped by other sedimentary deposits at their seaward edge. In numerous places along the coast, marsh peat actually juts from the seaward edge of beaches, evidencing the former position of the marsh.

Tidal mudflats accumulate in a manner similar to the initial stages of tidal marsh development. The differences are that sediments have not accumulated above the mid-tide level and the mudflats remain unvegetated. Tidal mudflats are exposed at each low tide. The mudflats at Long Wharf in New Haven are a particularly good example of this type of coastal feature.

ALTHOUGH WE HAVE DISCUSSED a number of shoreline features separately, no feature should be considered independent and unrelated to other components of the coastal system. Almost invariably, features occur together, forming unique and interacting units. Each feature responds in a particular way to changing physical conditions, and in turn, influences other features.

(This article was excerpted from Long Island Sound: An Atlas of Natural Resources, prepared under the supervision of the Coastal Management Program of the DEP.)



The eastern pipistrelle (Pipistrellus subflavus) is found statewide in Connecticut. (Photo by Les Mehrhoff.)

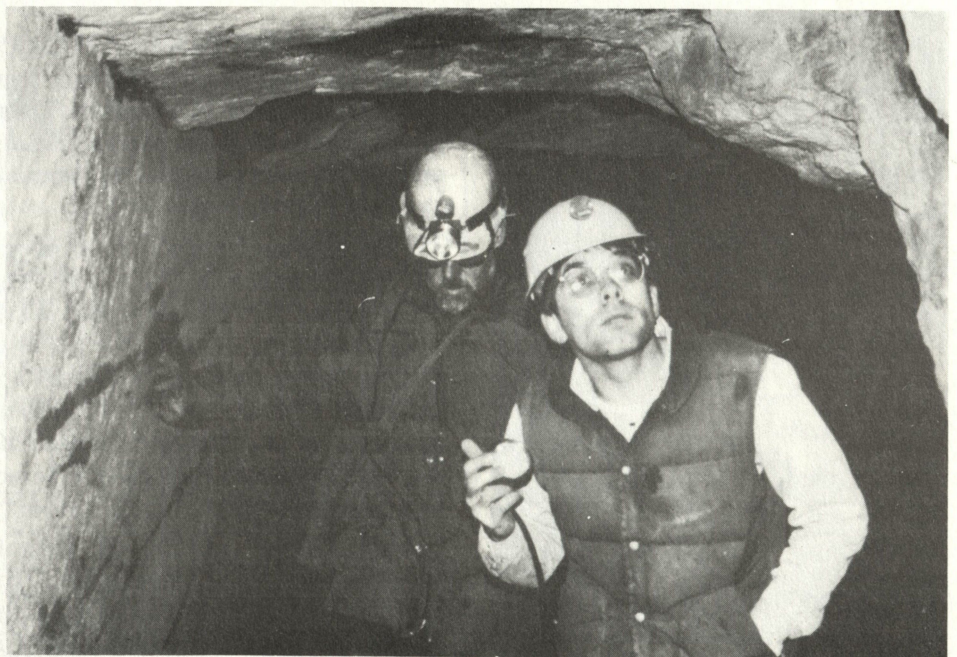
In Defense of Bats

by

Robert E. Dubos

Manager, Scientific Collections
Department of Ecology and
Evolutionary Biology
The University of Connecticut

WITH HALLOWEEN on the way, there will be many legends and stories told about bats, and almost all of them will be complete misconceptions. Bats will not get in your hair, and — in Connecticut — no bat will suck your blood. All bats found in our state are in the same family, and they feed exclusively on insects. New England bats are not dangerous unless they are rabid, and even a rabid bat is not likely to bite unless you pick it up.



(Left to right) Robert Dubos, author, and Thomas W. French, director of Nongame and Endangered Species Program, Massachusetts Division of Fisheries and Wildlife, searching for bats in a cave in Connecticut. (Photo by Les Mehrhoff.)



Northern long-eared bat (*Myotis septentrionalis*). Note the large ear of this bat above its small eye, lower right. (Photo by Alan Hicks; taken in a mine in New York state.)



Cluster of little brown bats (*Myotis lucifugus*) hanging on the wall of a cave in C

OVER THE PAST 50 YEARS, nine species of bats have been known to occur in Connecticut. These species can be divided into two main groups: 1) solitary, migratory bats; and 2) colonial, hibernating bats.

The solitary, migratory bats are the most spectacular to view. The silver-haired bat (*Lasionycteris noctivagans*) has long, dark brown fur that is silver tipped, creating a frosted appearance. The hoary bat (*Lasiurus cinereus*) is the largest Connecticut bat, and the most strikingly colored. The reddish-brown fur is strongly frosted, giving the bat an overall hoary, or very aged, appearance. This bat can have a wing-spread of 16 inches. The red bat (*Lasiurus borealis*) is easily recognized by its bright, rusty-red fur.

These three species of bats live alone or in small groups, mostly in

forests. They migrate to warmer climates to overwinter. Their migration usually follows the coastline, and they are, therefore, seen more often in coastal communities and sometimes by sailors at sea. They have been known to take rest breaks on boats in our coastal waters.

THE OTHER SPECIES are more colonial in habit, and use caves and mines extensively in winter as hibernating sites. Two species, the Indiana bat (*Myotis sodalis*), a U.S. endangered species, and the small-footed bat (*Myotis leibii*) have not been found in Connecticut since 1940. Because of their absence, annual surveys are done of all known Connecticut hibernacula in the hope that these bats will re-establish themselves in the state.

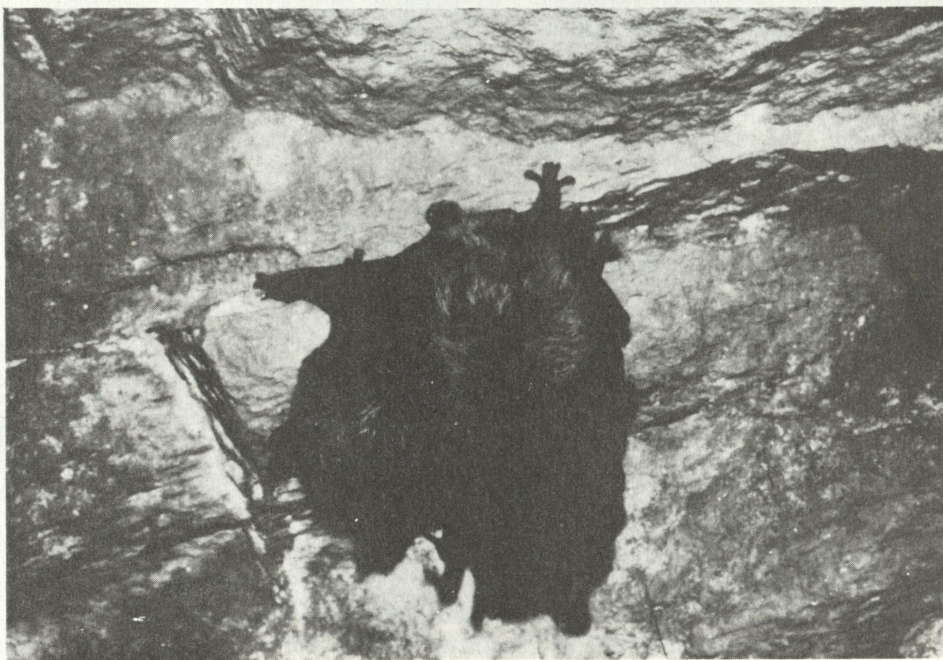


Connecticut. (Photo by Les Mehrhoff.)

Of the remaining species, the eastern pipistrelle (*Pipistrellus subflavus*) is the smallest Connecticut bat, and is distinguishable by its tri-colored fur with a yellowish-brown central band. It seldom inhabits buildings and during the summer inhabits rock shelters in the woods.

The northern long-eared bat (*Myotis septentrionalis*), formerly known as Keen's bat, mimics the ecology and behavior of the little brown bat (*Myotis lucifugus*). Both are found in large numbers hibernating in suitable localities in caves and tunnels in the state. During the summer months, they form large nursery colonies in attics and barns.

The big brown bat (*Eptesicus fuscus*) is slightly smaller than the hoary bat. Some individuals hibernate in caves and mines, but a majority regularly hibernate in buildings or rock crevices.



Two big brown bats (*Eptesicus fuscus*) hanging on the wall of a cave in Connecticut. (Photo by Les Mehrhoff)

NORTHERN long-eared bats, little brown bats, and big brown bats are the three species that most impact on man. They have been known as pests to some and as saviors to others. To say that they are misunderstood by most is an understatement. They have received bad press for a long period of time, but Bat Conservation International and other interested groups are turning this around.

Most people will tolerate bats flying outside their houses and over their lawns until the bats either get too close for comfort or appear inside the living space. Bats are as clean as pet hamsters or gerbils, and actually do us a great service in ridding the air of an astounding number of insects each evening. The estimated figure of 3,000 insects per bat per evening is widely used. Articles have appeared in news-

papers and magazines extolling the virtues of bats and clearing up some misconceptions about them.

For people with bats in or near their homes, the most constructive idea is to build bat houses and place them on outbuildings. The bats provide natural insect control, especially of mosquitoes. Bat houses help to move the bat colonies from attic, garage, or barn to their own space outside.

For more information about bats and purchasing ready-made bat houses, contact: Bat Conservation International, Inc., P.O. Box 162603, Austin, Texas 78716-2603.

For answers to questions concerning Connecticut's bats and plans for building your own bat house, contact The Connecticut State Museum of Natural History, The University of Connecticut, Box U-23, Storrs, CT 06268.



The DEP was instrumental in obtaining Watch Rock in Old Lyme. The property is now held by the Old Lyme Conservation Trust. (Photos: Courtesy of Old Lyme Conservation Trust.)

And Another Piece of Land is Saved

by

Mary Ann Dickinson
Principal Environmental Analyst

ON AUGUST 11, the Old Lyme Conservation Trust held a ribbon-cutting ceremony at its newly-acquired Watch Rock property. DEP Commissioner Leslie Carothers presented Ursula Schaefer, Old Lyme Conservation Trust president, with a big facsimile of the check for \$395,000 which the trust recently received from the Connecticut River Gateway Commission and the DEP for development rights to the property.

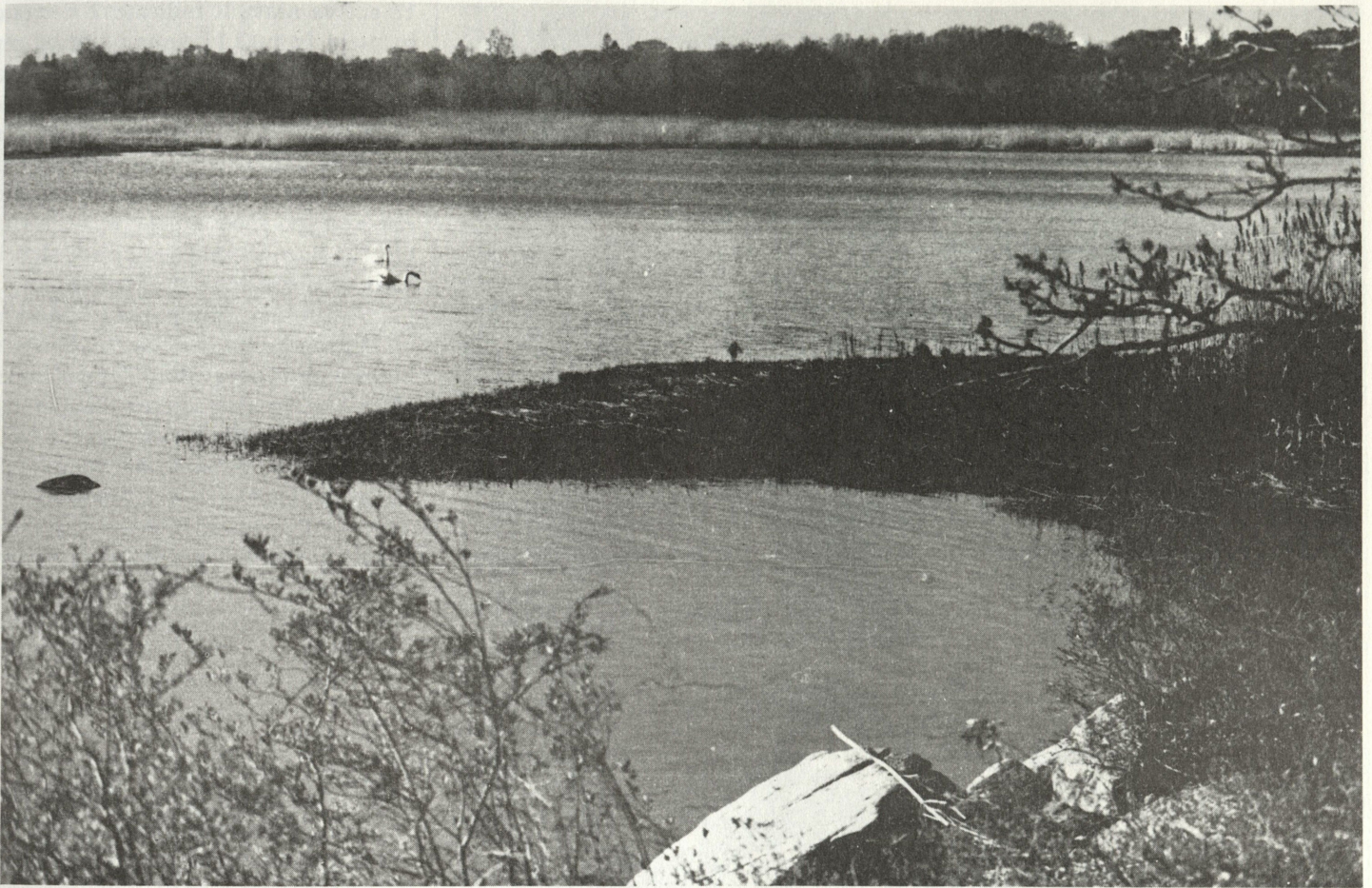
The ceremonies were the culmination of nearly two years of effort by the Conservation Trust to purchase the Watch Rock property.

"This purchase," Carothers said, "is an impressive success story and a remarkable example of individuals putting their time and their contributions to work to preserve an irreplaceable piece of their local landscape. It's

also an encouraging demonstration of how combined efforts at local and state levels can accomplish things neither could pull off alone."

Carothers also expressed the thanks of the DEP for the gift of another nearby open space property. The 14-acre tract was given to the Lower Connecticut River Land Trust, a subsidiary of the Connecticut River Gateway Commission, earlier this year by the late Margaret D. Hefflon. The Gateway Commission in turn gave the property to the DEP.

WATCH ROCK, a property of 25 wooded acres which borders for one half mile the mouth of the Duck River in the Connecticut River estuary, was the last



The recent acquisition of Watch Rock is a part of the DEP's effort to preserve our landscape.

available undeveloped land on Old Lyme's shore suitable for open space and passive recreational use.

"Fate has been kind to Old Lyme," Schaefer said. "We found, in the midst of a building boom, a choice piece of waterfront property at a bargain price. The Gateway Commission's purchase from us of a scenic easement covered a substantial part of the purchase price. And the community's remarkably enthusiastic response let us complete this purchase."

Old Lyme's interest in acquiring Watch Rock actually goes back many years, according to Schaefer. "Old Lyme's Conservation Trust," she said, "was trying to raise funds to buy Watch Rock in 1970." The parcel was sold instead to the Loctite Corporation of Newington, whose plans for a corporate headquarters or research and development facility never materialized.

In mid-November, 1986, the trust heard that the parcel was on the market and that Loctite was anxious to sell before the end of the year. The Conservation Trust, Schaefer said, made Loctite an unconditional offer of a half million dollars, which the company accepted.

The trust was able to borrow the \$500,000 from a private conservation foundation — with a loan repayment deadline of October 1, 1987 — and the closing was held on December 23, 1986. "Then," Schaefer said, "we sat down to try to figure out how to pay off the half million."

Their ultimate solution was to approach the Con-

necticut River Gateway Commission — created by the Connecticut General Assembly in 1973 for the purpose of purchasing development rights to preserve lands and waters in the eight-town Lower Connecticut River Conservation Zone.

THE WATCH ROCK PURCHASE is an innovative approach for the Gateway Commission, according to Irwin Wilcox, Gateway Commission chairman. For the first time, Gateway funds will be used to acquire property for actual use by the public in addition to protecting it from commercial development. "This provides an even better value for the tax payers," said Wilcox.

The balance of the funds needed for the acquisition came from the highly successful local fund raising effort conducted by the Old Lyme Conservation Trust. Nine-hundred and ninety-five donors contributed \$224,273 to the Conservation Trust's "Campaign for Watch Rock."

The Old Lyme Conservation Trust is now developing a management plan for Watch Rock. They will keep the area natural and unspoiled but plan to thin wooded areas, clear trails and picnic sites, and open up water views.

The Hefflon property, which forms a peninsula between Joe's Creek and the Blackhall River, to the east of Watch Rock, abuts several other properties owned by the DEP. The total 30-acre area will be preserved as productive tidal marsh and tidal wetlands. ■



The DEP's Wildlife Bureau reports that while there are more osprey nests, there are fewer young. (Photo: Irene Vandermolen.)

Osprey Update

RESULTS FROM THE 1988 Connecticut osprey nesting season indicate a 23 percent increase in the number of young fledged over 1987," announced Julie Victoria, non-harvested wildlife program biologist

for the DEP Wildlife Bureau.

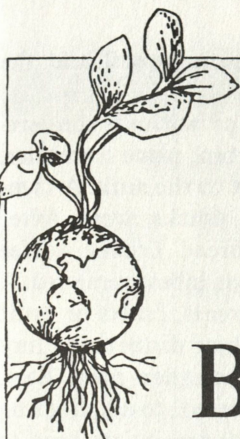
"Unlike last year's osprey production, when 74 young were fledged from 35 active nests, the 95 young fledged this year resulted from 51 nests. While this reflects an increase of

16 active nests, it indicates a decrease in yield from 2.11 young fledged per active nest in 1987 to 1.86," Victoria explained. Even though osprey, like most natural populations, experience annual fluctuations in productivity, if the number of active nests continues to rise and the food supply remains stable, the number of young fledged each year will continue to increase.

Adult and young osprey move to wintering grounds in South America, Mexico, and the southern United States after the nesting season. While the adults return every year to the same nesting areas to breed, the young will remain at the wintering grounds until they are two or three years of age and ready to breed. The Wildlife Bureau speculates that the increase in active nests from 35 in 1987 to 51 in 1988 is a result of the return and breeding of these three-year-old birds.

THE OSPREY, OR FISH HAWK, is one of the most widely distributed birds in the world. Historically, osprey were plentiful in New England, with approximately 1,100 active nests located between New York and Boston during the late 1940s. By 1974, there were only nine active nests in Connecticut. The decline in nesting osprey was due primarily to the use of the pesticide DDT in the Connecticut River system. DDT accumulated in the biological food chain, causing osprey egg shells to become thin and break. However, restrictions on the use of DDT and other organo-chlorine pesticides in the early 1970s have prompted a steady recovery of osprey populations. "Unfortunately, due to the increased development of coastal areas and destruction of historic nest sites for osprey, we may never again witness the high populations of the 1940s," concluded Victoria.

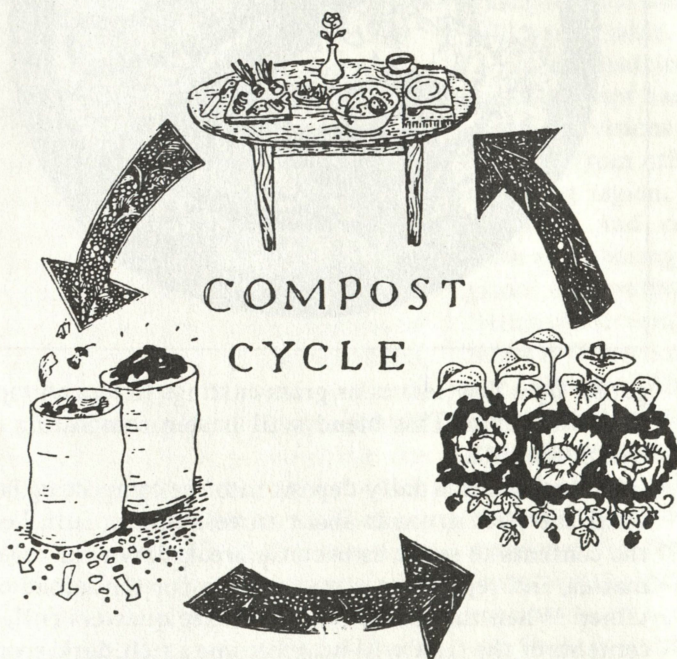
The Wildlife Bureau has published a summary of the 1988 osprey nesting season. Copies may be obtained through the osprey program at Sessions Woods Wildlife Management Area, P.O. Box 1238, Burlington, CT 06013; phone (203) 584-9830. ■



Backyard Composting

Something you can do right now.

by
Jean Dickinson
Illustrations by
Mark Richardson



Many may wonder why we should even bother composting. Why not combine all the kitchen scraps, plastic, and paper wastes into a conventional refuse can or compactor and then delegate this mound to the garbage collector? Then, that way, as soon as the garbage truck backs down the driveway, we can forget all about it. We face a garbage crisis. All around the country, communities are running out of landfill areas. Then, too, most of us like getting something for nothing, and investing table scraps in a compost bin yields "brown gold," a far superior tonic for any garden than chemical fertilizers. Sorry, Ortho.

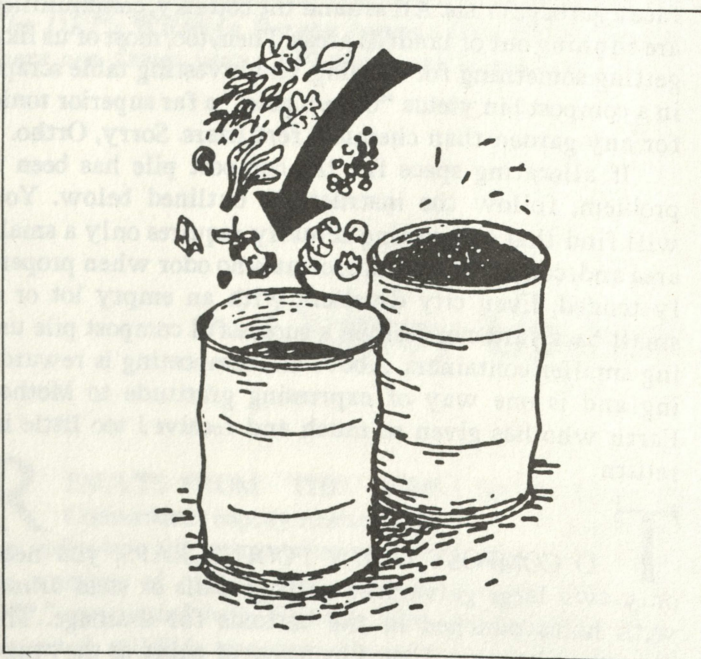
If allocating space for the compost pile has been a problem, follow the instructions outlined below. You will find that composting actually requires only a small area and, contrary to rumor, creates no odor when properly tended. Even city dwellers with an empty lot or a small backyard can fashion a successful compost pile using smaller containers. Above all, composting is rewarding and is one way of expressing gratitude to Mother Earth who has given so much and receive 1 too little in return.

BACKYARD COMPOSTING is the simple process of turning kitchen food scraps into rich soil for either indoor plants or the outdoor garden. While assisting nature to replenish the earth, composters effectively reduce household garbage destined for an expensive trip to a landfill site miles away.

TO COMPOST DAILY FOOD SCRAPS, you need only two large galvanized garbage pails or steel drums with holes punched in the bottoms for drainage. The drums can be camouflaged by a coat of paint, as they may



loom large in the space available. Lacking metal containers, a wooden crate or simply a corner of the garden will do.



Add a pail full of manure or rich topsoil and the composting process is ready to begin.

To save leftovers, peels, and scraps without converting the kitchen into the composting bin, place a smaller, covered container on the counter next to the sink. A two-quart, wide-mouthed jar or bucket works well. After breakfast, toss in any eggshells, bread crusts, coffee grounds, or tea bags with plastic tags or labels removed. A successful compost loves leftover cereals, fruits or fruit peels, pits and seeds. Following lunch or dinner, add any vegetable matter and table scraps other than meat. Beef, poultry or fish leftovers send a clarion call to neighboring cats, dogs, and raccoons, who while appreciative, tend to be messy diners. A fellow composter feeds his friendly raccoon after the domestic animals have been safely retired indoors.

Once the sink-side container is full, dump its contents into the outside can or drum already holding the pail of manure or topsoil. Survey the scene and if the reposing pile is not wildly attractive, a handy rake can be used to



gather up a few leaves or grass cuttings to toss on top of the new scraps. This blend will hasten composting and enrich the pile.

Continue this daily deposit into the composting bank until the first drum is about three-quarters full. Leave the contents to settle as bacteria break down the organic matter, and repeat the same formula for the second container. When the second drum is three quarters full, the contents of the first will have become a rich, dark, spongy soil — garden-ready and gorgeous.

So keep those landfill mountains at bay, save your table scraps and yard clippings for the compost bin. Your plants and flowers will congratulate you for reaching their level of intelligence.

(For additional copies of this article, write to Ms. Jean Dickinson, Rte. 4, Box 22, Pound Ridge, NY 10576.)

Keeping our Beaches Safe and Clean

by

Paul Stacey

Senior Environmental Analyst
and

William Howard

Senior Sanitary Engineer

(This article was extracted from a status report on Long Island Sound issued by the DEP in August, 1988.)

OPERATION BEACHWATCH is an information network for local officials who find medical debris on their beaches. This network has already helped identify instances of illegal dumping. The DEP informed local directors of health to report any incident of medical debris washing up on local beaches. The DEP has assisted in clean-up activities and in identifying the source of the debris.

REGULATIONS for the management of biomedical waste being developed by the DEP are now complete and will be proposed shortly. It is anticipated that they can be formally adopted through the legislative process by February, 1989. The drafted regulations create three sub-categories of biomedical waste: 1) infectious waste, 2) pathological waste, and 3) chemotherapy waste. The objective of the regulations is to prohibit the disposal of any infectious waste which has not been rendered non-infectious by means of special treatment methods approved by the DEP. Pathological and chemotherapy wastes will be required to be segregated and incinerated. As drafted, the regulations will require generators of biomedical wastes to be registered with the DEP. Generators will also be required to record quantities of waste generated through a manifest procedure that will track the wastes from their point of generation through transportation and final dis-



Connecticut residents have a right to safe and clean beaches; the DEP aims to protect that right. (DEP file photo.)

position. In that way, the generators become responsible to assure proper transportation and disposal and can be held accountable.

In the drafting of the regulations, every attempt has been made to incorporate provisions consistent with regulations from other states within the northeast region. We plan to continue to work and communicate closely with neighboring states to assure a regional cooperative effort. At a recent National Governors' Association Conference, Governor O'Neill and Governor DiPrete of Rhode Island sponsored a successful resolution to foster interstate cooperation to regulate the handling and disposal of medical waste. A recently-passed Senate Bill (S. 2680) mandates the federal Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) to establish a regional tracking system for Connecticut, New York, and New Jersey. If the bill becomes law, Connecticut will participate in such a tracking system.

ILLEGAL DUMPING of any materials must cease; vigorous action must be taken against any identified violators. The DEP has already taken

additional action to assure that accidental or illegal discharges of sewage are minimized and quickly reported. The deliberate by-passing of treatment facilities has been illegal for many years. Recent regulations adopted by the DEP strengthen the reporting requirements to ensure that corrective actions are taken immediately and that enforcement action is taken where appropriate. Because of two recent accidental sewage discharges to Long Island Sound, the DEP has reminded local officials of their reporting obligations. Local officials are obligated to notify the DEP within one hour of an overflow incident on the DEP emergency telephone number. The DEP has the capability to respond 24 hours a day to these incidents. DEP Commissioner Leslie Carothers has initiated enforcement actions against several municipalities in an effort to collect substantial penalties for recent incidents of discharge of raw or partially-treated sewage. Commissioner Carothers has indicated that the DEP will continue to take these actions in response to any town's failure to provide adequate protection against such incidents. ■

Connecticut Audubon

The following events are scheduled by the Connecticut Audubon Society in Fairfield.

Saturday, October 22, and Saturday, October 29, noon-4 p.m. Old-fashioned hay rides at the H. Smith Richardson Sanctuary and Christmas Tree Farm in Westport. Christmas tree farming and wildlife management demonstrations will be featured in a tour of the farm in mule-drawn hay wagons. Refreshments, family fun. Adult members \$3 per person, \$2.00 children under 12, nonmembers \$5 adult, \$2.00 children. Call 259-6305 for directions and information.

Saturday, October 29 and Monday, October 31, 5:00-8:00 p.m. Take a nighttime trip through the Enchanted Forest (Larsen Wildlife Sanctuary) at 2325 Burr Street, Fairfield. A great way to enjoy an educational, fun, and safe Halloween weekend. Bring the whole family. Meet the creatures of the night, hear stories about prehistoric Connecticut Indians in an authentic wigwam. Wear your Halloween costume. For children ages 4-8, accompanied by an adult. Members \$3 per child, nonmembers \$5. Refreshments available. You do not need to pre-register for either of these events. Just show up and have a good time. Further information, phone (203) 259-6305. ■

Museum of Natural History

During October, "Bats and Spiders" will be the topic of Children's Workshops held at The Connecticut State Museum of Natural History at The University of Connecticut in Storrs. Advance registration is required; fee. For children ages 6-8, Thursday, October 13, 4:15-5:30 p.m.; for ages 4 and 5, Saturday, October 15 from 10 - 11 a.m.; for ages 9 and up, Thursday, October 27, 4:15 - 5:30 p.m.

On Sunday, October 16, "Birds in

Flight," a slide lecture about high-speed nature photography will be given by Russell C. Hansen at 3 p.m. in the Benton Connection Gallery, Jorgensen Auditorium, The University of Connecticut in Storrs. Admission: Free for Museum members, \$3 for nonmembers.

"North American Birds, Paintings by Rex Brasher, Connecticut Artist (1869-1960)," an exhibit by The Connecticut State Museum of Natural History at The University of Connecticut will run through October 24, 1988. Thirty original water color paintings will be exhibited in the Benton Connection Gallery of the Jorgensen Auditorium at the University of Connecticut in Storrs; Monday-Friday, 11 a.m.-4 p.m., Saturday and Sunday, 1-4 p.m. For information, write Box U-23, UConn, Storrs, or call (203) 486-4460. ■

Orienteering Events

The following orienteering events, sponsored by the New England Orienteering Club, Inc., are open to the public and beginners are welcome. There is a \$3 charge for the map. Participants should wear comfortable hiking shoes or joggers, long-sleeved shirt, and pants. Hiking the beginners' courses typically takes about an hour and a half. Instruction on basic compass and map reading skills is available from club members. Events are held rain or shine.

Sunday, October 2: Huntington State Park, Redding. Training meet. Directions: From I-84, take exit 10 on to Rte 6 and go for one mile. Turn left on Rte 25. After 0.4 mile, turn right on Rte 302. After 6 miles, go south on Rte 58. After 1.2 miles, turn left on Sunset Hill Road. Follow 2.4 miles. Damon Douglas, (203) 629-9226. U.S. Team Coach. Sponsor: Western Connecticut Orienteering Club.

Sunday, October 23: Forest Park, Springfield, Mass. Registration: 10 a.m. - 1 p.m. Directions: From I-91 northbound, take exit 2 onto Long Street.

After 0.3 miles, make a right on Sumner Avenue. After 0.6 miles make a right into the park. Or, from I-91 southbound, take exit 1, then an immediate left into the park. John Kelly, (413) 596-2280. Sponsor: NEOC.

Sunday, November 6: Brooksvale Town Park, Hamden. "Western Connecticut Rules," Registration: 11 a.m. to 1 p.m. Directions: From Hamden, take Rte 10 north for four miles. Turn left onto Brookvale Avenue. Travel 1/2 mile to park. Cathy Tall, (203) 272-7354. Sponsor: WCOC

Sunday, November 13: Mt. Tom Reservation, Holyoke, Mass. Registration: 10 a.m. to 1 p.m. Directions: From I-91, take exit 17A to Rte 5. Go north on Rte 5 for five miles. Take left to Mt. Tom Reservation (opposite Ski Outlet). Follow 'O' meet signs to parking at Lake Bray. Sponsor: NEOC.

Sunday, November 20: Pond Mountain, Kent, Connecticut. Peter Goodwin, (203) 927-4021. Sponsor: WCOC. ■



New Publication

The first issue of a quarterly newsletter that focuses on providing information to Connecticut companies and other generators on reducing, recycling, and improving the management of hazardous waste is now available.

The newsletter contains information on advanced technologies, waste minimization techniques, the latest publications and programs that are available, and an update of governmental activities.

To receive a copy, write to the Connecticut Hazardous Waste Management Service, Technical Assistance Programs, Suite 360, 900 Asylum Avenue, Hartford, CT 06105, or call 244-2007. ■



Negotiations Discontinued

Deputy Commissioner John Anderson announced that the Connecticut DEP and the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) have decided to discontinue negotiations with Solvents Recovery Service of New England (SRSNE). This is due to a less-than-adequate response by SRSNE to making short-term improvements at their Southington hazardous waste facility in order to protect public health, safety and welfare, and the public trust in the air, water, land, and other natural resources.

At this time, DEP and EPA plan to proceed with formal enforcement actions and pursue all appropriate legal remedies for both past and ongoing violations. To facilitate remedial decisions at the site, EPA will proceed with a federally-funded Remedial Investigation and Feasibility Study. In the meantime, both agencies will continue to closely monitor activities at the site to prevent further environmental degradation.

Earlier this year, DEP and EPA began a cooperative effort to resolve environmental problems at the SRSNE site in Southington. This site, an active hazardous waste management facility, is on the National Priority List of hazardous waste sites requiring clean-up. DEP and EPA have attempted to work cooperatively with SRSNE manage-

ment to develop an integrated approach — which included operational improvements, comprehensive site remediation, and regulatory compliance — to correcting environmental problems at the site. ■



AIAI Events

The following events are scheduled at the American Indian Archaeological Institute in Washington, Connecticut.

Tahtonka: Tragedy of the Plains Indians will be shown Saturday through Monday, October 1-3, 1988, at 2:30 p.m. *Tahtonka* is a 30-minute color film showing the effects that the white man's indiscriminate hunting of buffalo had on the Plains Indians. The Indians depended on the buffalo as a source of food and raw materials for clothing and tools.

Fingerweaving Workshop. The basic techniques of fingerweaving will be taught by Arlene Hardy on Saturday, October 15, from 10:30 a.m. to 3 p.m. Fingerweaving, braiding, twining, and other fiber work was done by Algonkian people and other Woodland cultures. Hardy participates regularly in rendezvous gatherings where people study and explore early crafts and technologies. Registra-

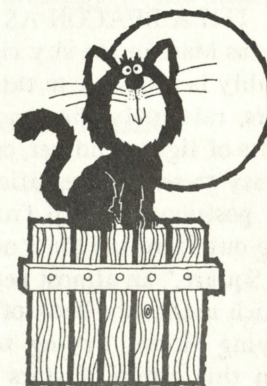
tion is \$20 for non-members and \$12 for members of AIAI. Participants should bring scissors. Yarn will be supplied. To register, call (203) 868-0518.

Stilt Dancers of Long Bow Village, will be shown Saturday through Monday, October 15-17, at 2:30 p.m. *Stilt Dancers* is a 27-minute color film of a stilt-dancing festival in rural China. The film recalls the time during the Cultural Revolution when such traditions were banned.

Fells Point — Baltimore, 1975, will be shown Saturday through Monday, October 22-24, at 2:30 p.m. *Fells Point* is a 38-minute color film about the successful attempt of a community to preserve an historic area of Baltimore. Fells Point, founded in 1730, remains a living museum of maritime and industrial tradition and architecture.

Psychics, Saints, and Scientists will be shown Saturday through Monday, October 29-31, at 2:30 p.m. This is a 33-minute color film about modern scientific research in parapsychology and biofeedback. Psychokinesis, ESP, dream transfer possibilities, electra-sleep and other phenomena and topics are considered.

Admission to the AIAI is by membership or a donation of \$3 for adults and \$2 for children ages 6-18. AIAI is accessible to the handicapped. Senior citizens are invited to the Small World Film Festival each Monday as AIAI's guests. For further information phone (203) 868-0518. All films are subject to change. ■

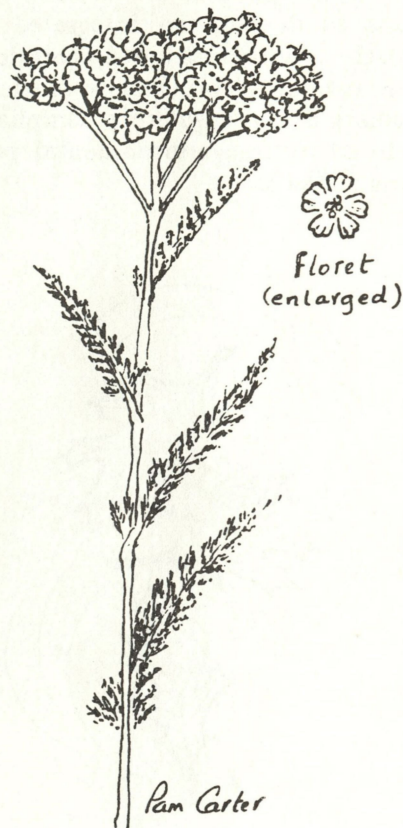


Yarrow

by
Gale W. Carter
Illustration by
Pam Carter

MANY PEOPLE CONFUSE yarrow (*Achillea millefolium*) with Queen Anne's lace. Both plants may grow side by side in fields or along roadsides; however, close inspection of these two plants will reveal some very noticeable differences. Both have fern-like leaves, but the leaves of yarrow are more finely cut. Both have very small flowers, but the flowers of Queen Anne's lace are arranged in an umbel, which means that the flower cluster is supported like an umbrella with the flower stalks all coming from the same point. The flowers of yarrow have stalks that arise from different points. This arrangement of the flower cluster is called a corymb.

Crush the leaves of yarrow and you will get a strong herb-like odor. The crushed leaves of Queen Anne's lace will smell carrot-like.



Yarrow was one of the many plants that the early Colonists brought for their gardens. It has since escaped from cultivation. Its flower is usually

white, but may be pink. The blossoming time for yarrow is from June to September.

The genus name *Achillea* is believed to have come from Achilles who made use of the medicinal qualities of yarrow in treating the wounds of his soldiers at the siege of Troy.

Millefolium, the species name, is a combination of two Latin words which mean "thousand-leaved," a reference to its finely-cut, feather-like leaves.

Yarrow has had numerous medicinal uses extending back thousands of years. The Colonists used this plant in a variety of ways, ranging from chewing the leaves for digestive problems or toothache to steeping the leaves to promote sweating to break up a fever. The Native Americans also used it widely. They made a solution from the leaves and flower for an eyewash, while other solutions from yarrow were used for treatment of earache and itching. Yarrow is sometimes called nose-bleed plant because it can be used to control bleeding.

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The Night Sky

On the Ecliptic

by
Francine Jackson

WITH A BEACON AS BRIGHT as Mars in the sky right now, it probably is difficult to think about the stars, relatively dim background pinpoints of light. And yet, one of our most easy-to-see constellations is in perfect position, just up from Mars. Popping out from the blackness is the "Great Square," an almost perfect figure which marks the body of Pegasus, the Flying Horse. Trying to find a horse in this group of stars isn't the easiest thing to do because the ancients:

1) only recognized the front half of his body; 2) saw him as upside-down; and 3) made no provisions for his wings. That is why today, when introducing this part of the sky, many of us try for something a bit more modern and relevant for this time of year: a baseball diamond.

Mars right now is within the boundaries of Pisces, the Fishes. This constellation consists of a circle of stars (the "circlet") known as the Western Fish, and a line of stars to the left of the Great Square, the Eastern Fish, tied together with a ribbon containing a knot — the star *al Risha*.

According to one legend, Venus and her son, Cupid, were startled by the monster-dragon Typhon. He could live in fire but not in water. Because Venus had been born from water, she

and Cupid changed into fish and escaped into the sea. So not to lose each other, they tied themselves together with a long line.

From our vantage point on Earth, the sun, moon, and planets seem to travel roughly in a line through the sky, called the ecliptic. To find this path, all you need are two of the above objects. However, on October 25, the ecliptic will be very easy to find because of the presence of three incredibly bright objects. First, find Mars. Then look to Mars' left (or east) to the full moon. On that night, the moon will be just above *al Risha*. Finally, almost equidistant to the moon but to its left (or east) will be the giant planet Jupiter. Connect these three, and you will have found one of the Earth's most important imaginary lines. ■

Letters to the Editor

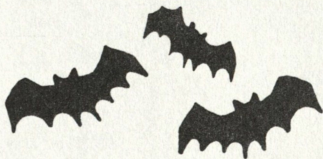
We received the new *Connecticut Environment* today. The graphics are wonderful, the articles are all engaging. May I suggest more focus on some issues?

We are a small state, geographically. It has become difficult, dangerous, and polluting to drive everywhere. Perhaps mass transit can be made to sound attractive.

Although our state receives much air and water pollution from outside, perhaps there is much more each citizen can do on a personal level to keep our state liveable. Our household has tried to be ecologically responsible by recycling papers, using as little plastic as possible and forgoing chemicals for gardening, etc. We need more information on how to be responsible without abandoning our contemporary lifestyle. What are other states doing? What new technologies are being developed to clean our overburdened environment? How safe are the chemicals we use daily? (Bleach, hair color, etc.) These are some of the personal things that everyone needs to be concerned about. Please include them in future issues.

Donna Ribera
Wallingford

Thank you for your wonderful letter. We'll do our best to live up to our responsibility to the citizens of our state who, like you, take this seriously. Ed.



I have been receiving the new *Connecticut Environment* since the beginning of the year and look forward to and enjoy each issue.

I received the July/August issue about a week before I saw the enclosed picture in our local paper. The picture shows a group of men carrying plastic trash bags full of asbestos and putting

them on a truck. The men are dressed only in shorts and sneakers, with no protective clothing. With all the publicity about the removal of asbestos and the proper handling of the material, I wonder how this company has a license to operate.

It makes me wonder — if the company thinks so little of the welfare of its employees, do they give any thought as to where they dispose of the asbestos?

Ruth M. Alex
Washington Depot

Thanks for keeping your eyes open. Mr. Manny Cordoza, of the State Health Department, indicated that by the time the plastic bags are loaded onto trucks, they have already been through two washings, and are thus virtually dust-free. For that reason, protective clothing is not necessary. We also contacted the asbestos removal company itself, and found that it was their practice to make sure the bags were clean and safe before they are taken out of the building. So, in spite of the fact that the situation in the photo looks dangerous, the company is in compliance with all safety and health regulations.

In the future, if you see any suspected mishandling of hazardous materials, please call the DEP at 566-4633. Ed.

I'm a life-long Connecticut resident and I never realized such marvelous, family-oriented programs were available within the state until *Connecticut Environment* started arriving at our home. Keep up the good work.

Ted Durley
Terryville



I recently had a chance to visit the town of Gilman, Vermont, where the Georgia Pacific has a subsidiary paper mill. I looked at a river that I found to be the Connecticut and to my surprise could see the bottom. The water was clean and clear. I was both saddened that the water in Connecticut has been allowed to become so polluted, and yet encouraged to know that it is still possible in New England to have a clean and beautiful river.

We are fortunate in Connecticut to live in such a beautiful state, but we still have a big job to do.

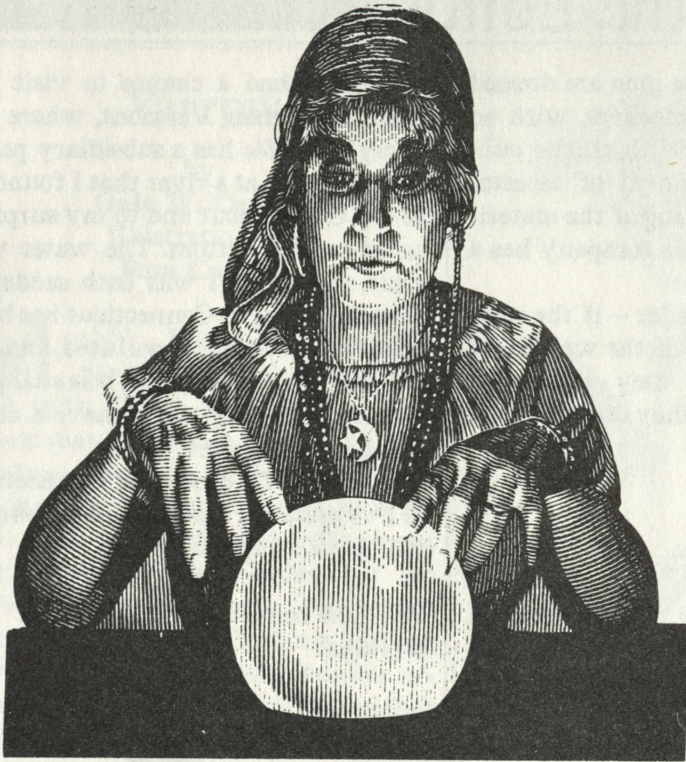
William Bernardo
Meriden



Endnote

"Just don't get too complicated, Eddie. When a guy gets complicated, he's unhappy. And when he's unhappy — his luck runs out."

Raymond Chandler



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